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THANOS:
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> THANOS

> WARLOCK

> GAMORA

> MOONDRAGON

> PTP

> ???

>PREVIOUSLY IN INFINITY ABYSS...

Thanos of Titan, mad worshipper of Mistress Death, rescued his cocoon-encased arch-nemesis Adam Warlock from an intergalactic asylum, convinced that only Warlock can unravel a universe-threatening enigma. Unbeknownst to anyone, this is not the real Thanos, but instead a Mysterious Doppelganger.

After feeling a cosmic disturbance, Captain Marvel, an intergalactic hero bonded to Earthman Rick Jones, also became involved--his cosmic senses leading him into the far reaches of space to a large cube of "Nothingness." Meanwhile, Spider-Man and Dr. Strange, Earth's Sorcerer Supreme, have also begun to investigate strange goings on...

The mercenary Gamora, former ward of Thanos, happened upon a nihilist rally led by another counterpart of the mad Titan. During his speech, "Thanos" recognized Gamora in the crowd and ordered his thousands of followers to kill her. She narrowly escaped, and now searches for answers about her former master's motivations...

Moondragon, a Titan-raised telepath, was kidnapped by another of the Thanos doubles and charged with the task of awakening Adam Warlock from his cocoon state. Despite Moondragon's warnings that the process could damage Warlock, Thanos insisted that she try.

Meanwhile, a mysterious figure watches from the depths of oblivion, awaiting the end of all that is.

INFINITY ABYSS™, Vol. 1, No. 3, August, 2002. Published by MARVEL COMICS, a division of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 10 EAST 40TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10016. Published bi-weekly. Copyright © 2002 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $2.50 per copy in the U.S. and $4.00 in Canada (GST #R127032852). No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this publication with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. INFINITY ABYSS (including all prominent characters featured in this publication and the distinctive likenesses thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC. Printed in the U. S. A. PETER CUNEO, Chief Executive Officer; AVI ARAD, Chief Creative Officer; GUI KARYO, Chief Information Officer; DAVID BOGART, Managing Editor; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus.

MEANWHILE, DR. STRANGE'S OCCULT INVESTIGATION HAD LED HIM TO ALTERNATIVE ACTUALITIES.
THESE MYSTERIOUS BLOCKS OF NOTHINGNESS ARE APPEARING EVEN WITHIN THE MYSTIC REALMS.
YET I STILL HAVE NO CLUE AS TO THEIR ORIGIN OR WHAT THEY PORTEND.
BUT DEEP IN MY SOUL I SENSE THESE CUBES REPRESENT A DIRE THREAT TO ALL REALITY.
WITH A BLINDING FLASH, MY SUSPICIONS ARE CONFIRMED.
I WELCOME YOU, MY FELLOW DEFENDERS.

SO, STRANGE, YOU'VE STUMBLED UPON ANOTHER DANGER TO THE UNIVERSE.
AND THE BRUTISH HULK, SILVER SURFER AND MYSELF HAVE YET AGAIN BEEN UNCEREMONIOUSLY SUMMONED.
SO WORKS YANDROTH'S CURSE.
BUT THE EXACT NATURE OF THIS THREAT IS YET TO BE DETERMINED, NAMOR.
ALL I'VE LEARNED SO FAR IS--
EYES OF OSHTUR!!
PARANOIDS and NIHILISTS
JIM STARLIN WRITER/PENCILS
AL MILGROM INKER
JACK MORELLI LETTERS
CHRISTIE SCHEELE & HEROIC AGE COLORS
MARC SUMERAK ASST. EDITOR
TOM BREVOORT EDITOR
JOE QUESADA CHIEF

WHAT MADNESS IS THIS?!
LET HULK GO!!
CURSE THE FATES!
BEING DRAWN TOGETHER!
MERGING!!
FOR ONCE I ACTUALLY DESIRED YOUR QUARRELSOME PRESENCE!
No!
THE DEFENDERS ARE NOW TRAPPED WITHIN ONE OF THOSE BLOCKS OF NOTHINGNESS!
AND I'VE NO MEANS OF FREEING THEM!
BUT YANDROTH'S CURSE ONLY BRINGS THE DEFENDERS TOGETHER WHEN THE PERIL TO THE UNIVERSE IS FAR GREATER THAN ANY SINGLE MEMBER CAN HANDLE.
SO WHAT COURSE OF ACTION DO YOU NOW PURSUE, STRANGE...?

AS THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS PONDERED THAT DILEMMA...
THE TIME HAS COME TO STIR ADAM WARLOCK FROM HIS PUPA SLUMBER.
MOONDRAGON AND PIP WERE BEING DECEIVED BY AN IMITATION MAD TITAN.
RISE AND SHINE, OL' BOY.
QUIET! THIS REQUIRES MY TOTAL CONCENTRATION.
EVEN WHILE UNCONSCIOUS WARLOCK'S PSYCHIC DEFENSES ARE...
...INTENSE.
LINKING MENTALLY WITH HIM IS NO EASY MATTER.
BUT I FEEL CONTACT NEARING...
WE ARE MERGING AS ONE!
YET THERE IS RESISTANCE!
BUT NOTHING I CANNOT OVERCOME!
I'M BREAKING THROUGH!

DIRECTLY INTO ADAM'S MEMORY CENTER, AS PLANNED.
FOR THIS IS WHERE I WOULD MOST LIKELY FIND THAT WHICH TROUBLES HIM.
HIS ENTIRE LIFE DANCES BEFORE ME.
AND UNLESS I'M GRAVELY MISTAKEN I HAVE ALSO LOCATED THE INNER CHILD.
BROODING ATOP A DARK AND DISTURBING REMEMBRANCE.

ADAM.
GO AWAY, MOON-DRAGON.
I'VE COME TO HELP.
I NEED NO AID.
I REQUIRE ONLY PEACE AND SOLITUDE.
I REALIZE NOW THAT IS ALL I EVER TRULY CRAVED.
YOU'VE BEEN PSYCHICALLY INJURED.
MANY TIMES.
LET ME HELP.
NO ONE CAN HELP.
AS YOUR FRIEND, I CAN'T LEAVE YOU LIKE THIS.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, HEATHER.
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO.
BUT HARM.
WELL, WE'LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT.
NO!
DON'T!
ARRGH!
I WARNED YOU!

NOW GET OUT!
LEAVE ME ALONE!
NO!
WELL, MOONIE, LOOKS LIKE YOUR PART IN THIS OPERATION IS COMPLETE.
PISSED HIM OFF, DIDN'T YOU?
... CAN HELP...
TROLL, YOU AND THE WOMAN LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!
I WILL HANDLE THIS!
YOU GOT IT!
MOVE!!
LEARNED WAY BACK WHEN ADAM GETS RILED...
...YOU NEED A FIREPROOF HIDE TO DEAL WITH HIM!
THANOS!
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU WERE INVOLVED!

AND YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO DISTURB ME NEEDLESSLY!
THERE IS NEED, ADAM WARLOCK!
THERE IS A DIRE THREAT TO ALL REALITY ONLY YOU CAN AVERT!

WHAT DANGER EXISTS THAT YOU, TITAN, CANNOT HANDLE WITHOUT ANYONE'S AID?
A PERIL I PERCEIVE, BUT CANNOT DEFINE!
THEN DEFINE WITHOUT MY INPUT!!
I CANNOT ASSIST YOU!
YOU HAVE SECRET KNOWLEDGE, WARLOCK!
I HAVE NOTHING BUT PAIN AND ANGER!
No!
I BELIEVE YOU POSSESS INFORMATION YOU MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN!
I HAVE FORGOTTEN NOTHING!
THEN TELL ME HOW YOU CAME TO BE IN THAT DEGATORIAN ASYLUM?
ASYLUM!!
YES... I WAS...
I DON'T... REMEMBER!
WHAT WAS THE LAST THING THAT YOU DO REMEMBER?

I WAS BACK ON EARTH!
AT THE RUINS OF THE INFINITY WATCH'S CASTLE ON MONSTER ISLAND!
A VOICE SPOKE TO ME.
WHOSE VOICE?
AN ALIEN VOICE...
WHOSE VOICE?!
A NAME!
YES...
I... I KNOW THIS...
ATLEZ.
WHO'S ATLEZ?!
SOMEONE IN TERRIBLE NEED.
DESPERATE.
CAN YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC?
I AGREED TO HELP HIM DO SOMETHING...
I TRAVELED A LONG JOURNEY...
AND THERE WAS DARKNESS.
BUT THE DETAILS AREN'T THERE...
THERE IS A GAP IN MY MEMORY!
HOW?!
COSMIC TRAUMA.

AND AS I CONTEMPLATED THANOS'S RIDICULOUSLY CRYPTIC DIAGNOSIS, SPIDER-MAN CONTINUED ON HIS TREK, LEAVING FAR BEHIND FAMILIAR CONCRETE CANYONS.
HIS SPIDER-SENSE GUIDED HIM DEEP INTO UPSTATE NEW YORK.
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS AS FAR AS CONRAIL'S TAKING ME.
WHATEVER IT IS I'M HEADING TO IS NOW OFF TO THE WEST.
ALL ASHORE THAT'S GOING ASHORE!
I KNOW, I KNOW THAT'S BOATS, NOT TRAINS.
BUT ALL ABOARD JUST DIDN'T WORK HERE.
NO MORE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, SO IT LOOKS LIKE I DO MY TARZAN THING!
SURE HOPE I'M NOT BEING LED TO SOME ELEPHANT GRAVEYARD--!

AS CHANCE WOULD HAVE IT, OTHER TRAVELERS, AT THAT EXACT MOMENT, WERE ARRIVING AT THEIR DESTINATION.
OUR INSTRUMENTATION MUST [redacted] MALFUNCTIONING.
CAPTAIN, COMPUTER DIAGNOSTICS SAY ALL SYSTEMS ARE OPERATING AT PEAK EFFICIENCY.
AND THEY CLAIM A STELLAR SINGULARITY HAS RECENTLY OCCURRED AT THIS LOCATION.
PREPOSTEROUS!
BLACK HOLES DO NOT JUST APPEAR AND THEN DISAPPEAR WITHIN A FEW HOURS TIME!
WELL, SOMETHING VERY SIMILAR DID TAKE PLACE, ACCORDING TO OUR SCANNERS.
AND THE SKRULL HIGH COUNCIL SENT US TO INVESTIGATE.
YOUR ORDERS, CAPTAIN?
RUN THE USUAL SCANS AND TESTS.
I'LL PAD THE REPORT, AND WE'LL LOOK OUR USUAL COMPETENT SELVES.
BUT REALLY...
WHAT A WASTE OF TIME.
AND REMEMBER THAT ASTEROID BELT WHERE CAPTAIN MARVEL AND HIS FRIEND AND OTHER SELF, RICK JONES, FOUND THEIR OWN BLOCK OF NOTHINGNESS'?

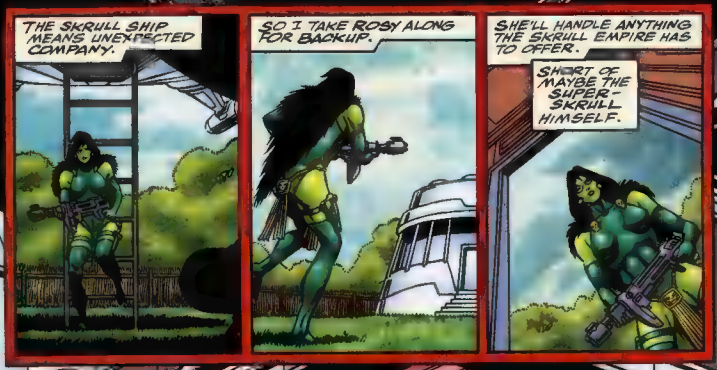
GENIS, THOSE RAYS SHOOTING FROM THAT THING?
SOMETHING MY COSMIC SENSES JUST DETECTED.
IT'S AN EYE-SQUINTING THING!
THIS NEW SPELL REVEALS THAT ONE TRAIL LEADS TO YET ANOTHER CUBE.
WHILE THE SECOND VEERS BACK TO MY OWN ACTUALITY.
PROBABLY DEAD ENDS.
BUT THIS LAST GLOWING AVENUE CUTS DEEPER INTO THE MYSTIC REALMS.
THIS IS THE PATH DR. STRANGE SHALL FOLLOW.
WHAT OTHER CHOICE HAVE I?
SO IT'S GOING [redacted] INTO SPACE OR ANOTHER DIMENSION...
OR FOLLOWING THE TRAIL THAT LEADS BACK HOME.
GIVE YOU THREE GUESSES WHICH ONE I CHOOSE.
OKAY. NEXT STOP EARTH!

IT APPEARS THIS WILL BE A JOURNEY THROUGH MULTIPLE PLANES OF EXISTENCE.
HEADING TOWARD THE OUTER EDGES OF REALITY.
AND BACK ON THE FAUX-THANOS'S SPACECRAFT, HIS BROTHERS WERE MAKING SIMILAR DISCOVERIES.
NO, I DON'T KNOW WHY THE SCANNERS SUDDENLY DETECTED THE EMANATIONS.
BUT THE MOST INTERESTING ENERGY SIGNATURE RADIATES FROM THE TRAIL LEADING TO EARTH.
IT SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED.
I WILL GO.
AND SMASH ANY RESISTANCE I MEET ALONG THE WAY.
WHICH IS WHY SOMEONE SUBTLER WILL HANDLE THIS TASK, WARRIOR.
ARMOUR, YOUR NIHILISTS?
I SHALL IMMEDIATELY DISPATCH A SQUAD TO THE EARTH LOCATION, MYSTIC.
WELL DONE.
HOW IS X DOING WITH WARLOCK?

THEN IT IS AGREED THAT DISCOVERING ATLEZ'S IDENTITY SHOULD BE OUR TOP PRIORITY.
BUT HOW?
SEEING THAT ADAM'S NOW CONSCIOUS I DOUBT I CAN BE OF MUCH HELP, EVEN WITH HIS COOPERATION.
HOW ABOUT A TRIP BACK TO TH' OL' HOME-STEAD?
MONSTER ISLAND?
IT MIGHT PROVE A SUBTLE MEANS TO STIR YOUR MEMORY.
IF YOU THINK IT COULD HELP...
PIP, WOULD YOU...
WE'RE OUT OF HERE!
TAKING ADVICE FROM PIP THESE DAYS?
THE TRIP WAS MY IDEA... AND THEY WILL BE MON-I-TORED.
IN THE MEANTIME, YOU AND I HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO.
YOU REFER TO LINKING MINDS WITH ME TO FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SITU-ATION?
EXACTLY.
WELL...
IF YOU INSIST...

I DO.
I AM LOWERING MY PSYCHIC SHIELDS.
JUST RELAX.
DON'T RESIST ME.
NOT IN THE LEAST.
OUR MINDS WILL BECOME ONE!
OPEN YOUR-SELF TO ME.
FULLY AND WITHOUT RESERVE.
FOR ONLY BY DOING SO...
...WILL YOU OPEN YOUR-SELF TO ME.
NOW YOU CAN SEE EVERY-THING.
BEHOLD THE TRUE ME!
No!

A PROLONGED PSYCHIC BATTLE WOULD HAVE PROVEN TIRESOME.
DON'T YOU AGREE?
INSTEAD I NOW WELCOME YOU TO THE LEGION OF OBLIVION— REFRESHED AND READY TO SERVE THE CAUSE.
DOOMSDAY IS UPON US, SISTER.
ALL HAIL ARMA-GEDDON!
AND ON A NAMELESS PLANET IN THE BACKWATERS OF THE GALAXY, ONE OF THANOS'S MANY HIDEAWAYS...
HE ONCE CALLED THIS PLANET HOME, DURING HIS SUPPOSED RETIREMENT YEARS...
BUT DURING HER APPROACH, GAMORA COULDN'T DECIDE WHAT DISTURBED HER MORE: THE APPARENT METEOR CRATER NEXT TO THE OUT-BUILDING, OR...
...THE NEARBY SKRULL RESEARCH VESSEL.


THE SKRULL SHIP MEANS UNEXPECTED COMPANY.
SO I TAKE ROSY ALONG FOR BACKUP.
SHE'LL HANDLE ANYTHING THE SKRULL EMPIRE HAS TO OFFER.
SHORT OF MAYBE THE SUPER-SKRULL HIMSELF.

MAIN POWER IS OFF, AND COLLAPSED ROBOTS EVERYWHERE.

AND NO METEOR CAUSED THAT OPENING IN THE ROOF.

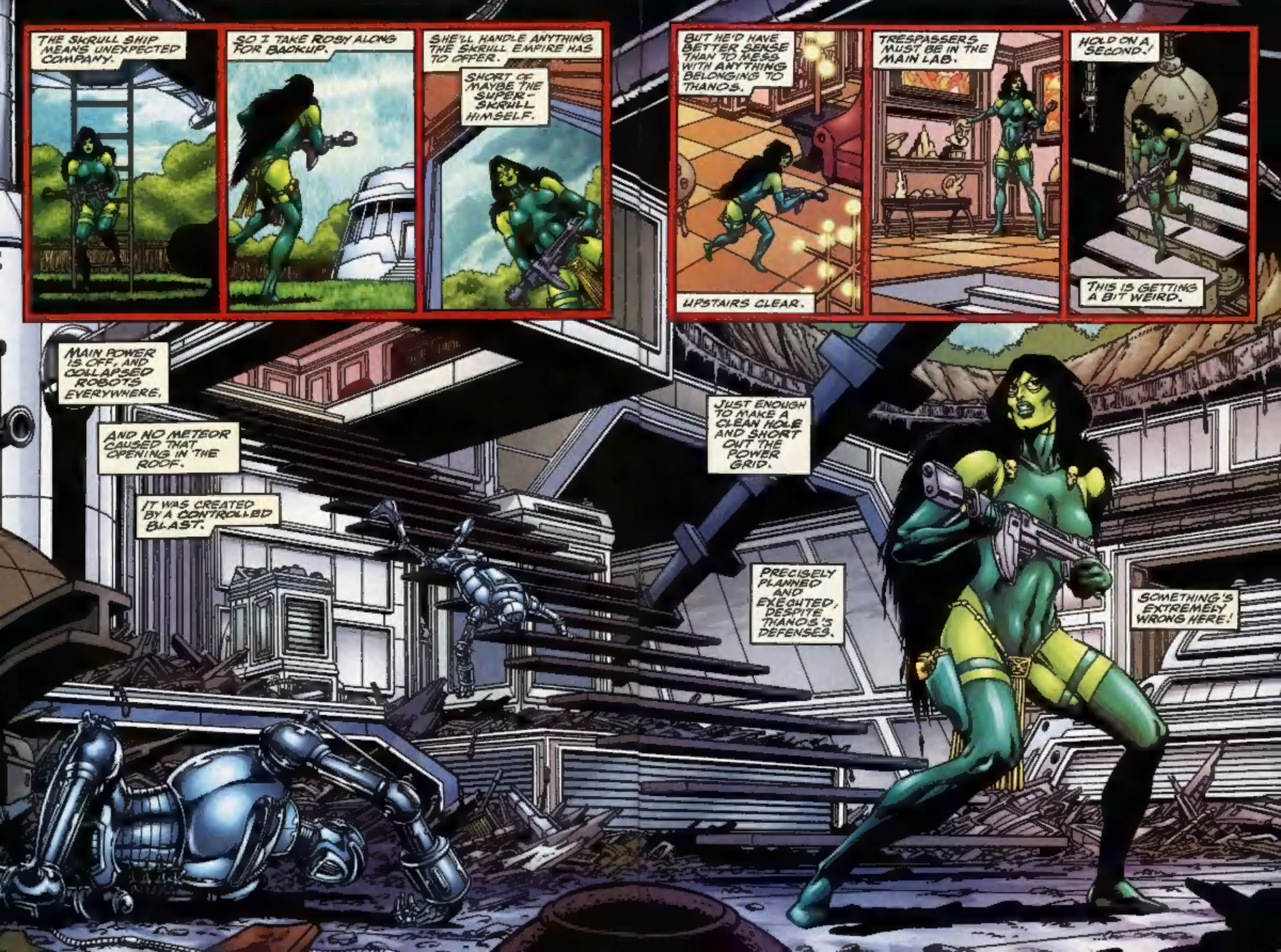
IT WAS CREATED BY A CONTROLLED BLAST.

BUT HE'D HAVE BETTER SENSE THAN TO MESS WITH ANYTHING BELONGING TO THANOS.
UPSTAIRS CLEAR.
TRESPASSERS. MUST BE IN THE MAIN LAB.
HOLD ON A SECOND.
THIS IS GETTING A BIT WEIRD.
JUST ENOUGH TO MAKE A CLEAN HOLE AND SHORT OUT THE POWER GRID.
PRECISELY PLANNED AND EXECUTED, DESPITE THANOS'S DEFENSES.
SOMETHING'S EXTREMELY WRONG HERE!

PLEASE DON'T SHOOT. AND WOULD YOU KINDLY FOLLOW ME?
HUH?
THE MASTER WOULD SPEAK WITH YOU.
THE MASTER?!
IMPOSSIBLE!
YOU COULDN'T HAVE BEATEN ME HERE!
I WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY RACE.
BUT ALLOW ME TO MAKE A WILD GUESS ON ANOTHER MATTER.
DID I RECENTLY TRY TO MURDER YOU?
IF NOT YOU, THANOS, THEN WHO?
AND WHAT DID YOU RUN INTO?
AN UNSTABLE NUCLEAR DEVICE?
A BLACK HOLE.

YOU SEEK KNOWLEDGE, GAMORA?
ANSWERS.
SOME MIGHT BE FOUND IN YONDER CHAMBER.
SURPRISE, SURPRISE.
AM I GOING TO LIKE WHAT I FIND IN THERE?
THAT SEEMS EXCEEDINGLY DOUBTFUL.
WOW!
THANOS, I KNOW YOU'VE ALWAYS SECRETLY ENJOYED BEING REFERRED TO AS THE MAD TITAN, FIGURING YOUR ENEMIES WERE UNDERESTIMATING YOU.
BUT WHAT'S IN THAT OTHER ROOM IS BY FAR THE CRAZIEST THING I'VE EVER SEEN, BY ANY STANDARD!
WHAT KIND OF PARANOID FRENZY WERE YOU IN WHEN YOU CAME UP WITH THAT BIT OF LUNACY?
IN HINDSIGHT I GRANT YOU, FROM THE START IT PROVED TO BE A RATHER ILL-CONCEIVED CONCEPT.
THAT'S PUTTING IT MILDLY!
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?
IT WAS A DEFENSIVE MEASURE.
THIS I'VE GOT TO HEAR!
WHILE THE REAL THANOS DONNED A NEW OUTFIT AND CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THE DETAILS OF HIS UNAVOIDABLE CONFESSION, THE ADVENTURER KNOWN AS SPIDER-MAN NEARED THE SOURCE OF A CERTAIN SIREN CALL.

THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE PLACE!
THE WAY MY SPIDER-SENSE IS WAILING, I'VE GOT TO BE ALMOST ON TOP OF WHATEVER'S STIMULATING IT.
THAT CLEARING AHEAD...
WHAT THE DEVIL?!!
I WAS EXPECTING MEPHISTO, OR MAYBE GALACTUS, OR AT LEAST A KREE INVASION FORCE.
INSTEAD I GET A NORMAN ROCKWELL FARMHOUSE!
WHAT'S GOING DOWN HERE?
DARK AND POWERFUL FORCES RUN UNCHECKED.
THERE ARE STILL SO MANY OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME.
DID I PICK THE PROPER PLAYERS?
HAVE I DOOMED THE SUCCESSOR ??
WILL THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE FALL INTO PLACE QUICKLY ENOUGH?
TO BE CONTINUED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